

August 22, 2011

Ms. Marlene Dortch
Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20554

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Received & Inspected

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FCC Mail Room

Re: WT Proceeding No. 11-65

EX PARTE OR LATE FILED

Dear Commissioners:

The West Virginia Retailers Association urges you to approve the proposed merger between T-Mobile USA and AT&T.

On behalf of the convenience, department, pharmacy, grocery, jewelry, hardware, apparel, building supply, and sports retailers throughout West Virginia, we contend that the value of improved and expanded access to high-speed mobile broadband cannot be underestimated. Retailers rely on the Internet to reach new demographics, stay in touch with valued customers, and advertise sales and products. Offering reliable broadband access to more people simply expands the pool of potential customers to which these retailers can appeal. It also increases the ease in which consumers can search online for information about retailers and their products.

From the business perspective of retailers, improved wireless Internet service provides better communications capabilities among business owners and employees. It also opens the door for small businesses to utilize cutting-edge business platforms and encourages innovation in the business community. Rural businesses could find that these improvements dramatically level the competitive playing field for them.

The merged T-Mobile/AT&T would expand its 4G LTE network's availability to an additional million more square miles of the country than AT&T's current plan, reaching over ninety-seven percent of Americans. It would also introduce more efficient use of spectrum, ensuring fewer dropped calls and dead zones. These frustrations would be replaced by smoother, faster data downloads and state-of-the-art mobile applications.

Please allow T-Mobile and AT&T to finalize their merger plans. The retail industry in West Virginia would benefit considerably from expanded access.

Sincerely,


Bridget Lambert, President
West Virginia Retailers Association

CC:
Chairman Julius Genachowski
Commissioner Mignon Clyburn
Commissioner Michael Copps
Commissioner Robert McDowell

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